



Local Agency Formation Commission
LAFCO of Napa County

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DECEMBER 4, 2006
AGENDA ITEM NO. 9b

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

November 27, 2006

TO: Local Agency Formation Commission

FROM: Keene Simonds, Executive Officer

SUBJECT: *Comprehensive Study of the Napa County Resource Conservation District*
The Commission will review draft written determinations that have been prepared as part of its *Comprehensive Study of the Napa County Resource Conservation District*. These determinations make statements regarding the delivery and capacity of District services and are being presented for discussion.

Staff has prepared draft written determinations as part of the Commission's *Comprehensive Study of the Napa County Resource Conservation District*. These draft determinations address the nine service factors the Commission is required to consider as part of its service review mandate for the District under California Government Code §56430. The draft determinations reflect information included in the Commission's recent service review report on the District that was prepared by P&D Consultants.

The draft determinations are being presented to the Commission for discussion and will be circulated to interested parties for review and comment following the meeting. Staff anticipates presenting final determinations, with or without revisions, to the Commission for consideration at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

WRITTEN DETERMINATIONS:

Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies (Government Code §56430(a)(1)):

- a) The Napa County Resource Conservation District does not own or maintain substantial infrastructure or equipment. The District relies on staff resources to deliver information and technical assistance to private landowners, organizations, and local jurisdictions involving its conservation services.

Dr. Andrew Alexander, Vice-Chair
Mayor, City of Calistoga

Kevin Block, Commissioner
Councilmember, City of Napa

Cindy Coffey, Alt. Commissioner
Councilmember, City of American Canyon

Bill Dodd, Chair
Supervisor, 4th District

Brad Wagenknecht, Commissioner
Supervisor, 1st District

Mark Luce, Alt. Commissioner
Supervisor, 2nd District

Guy Kay, Commissioner
Representative of the General Public

Brian Kelly, Alt. Commissioner
Representative of the General Public

Keene Simonds
Executive Officer

- b) The Napa County Resource Conservation District has made a measurable investment in staff over the last 20 years.. The increase in staff corresponds with the District's decision to expand the scope of its conservation services to address watershed and urban resource management issues.

Growth and Population Projections (Government Code §56430(a)(2)):

- a) The Napa County Resource Conservation District's jurisdictional boundary includes most of Napa County with the exception of an approximate 1,500 acre inhabited portion of the City of Napa. While specific population projections are not available, all 134,100 people currently estimated by the Association of Bay Area Governments to reside in Napa County benefit from the District's conservation services.
- b) The Association of Bay Area Governments projects an annual population growth rate for Napa County of 0.6 percent over the next 20 years. Although limited, this projected growth rate will contribute to the intensification of land uses and result in the continued demand for conservation services in Napa County.
- c) It is the policy of the County of Napa to direct urban development to the incorporated areas and to preserve surrounding lands for agricultural and open-space uses through restrictive zoning standards. This policy is reflected in the land use policies of the five incorporated cities and helps to ensure that agriculture and open-space remain predominant land uses within the jurisdictional boundary of the Napa County Resource Conservation District.

Financing Constraints and Opportunities (Government Code §56430(a)(3)):

- a) The Napa County Resource Conservation District is primarily funded by intergovernmental revenues, including contracts and grants. The dependency on contracts and grants to fund its conservation services makes the District financially reliant on revenue streams that are subject to external constraints.
- b) The Napa County Resource Conservation District serves as an instrument in securing federal and state grants that would not be otherwise available to fund conservation services in Napa County.
- c) In response to the loss of property tax revenue created by Proposition 13, the Napa County Resource Conservation District has been successful in developing alternative revenue streams to fund and expand its conservation services.

Cost Avoidance Opportunities (Government Code §56430(a)(4)):

- a) Through careful management of its contractual arrangements and grant rewards, the Napa County Resource Conservation District makes a concerted effort to avoid unnecessary expenditures.
- b) The Napa County Resource Conservation District is governed by volunteer board members that are appointed by the County of Napa Board of Supervisors. This appointment process achieves savings for the District by avoiding election costs.

Opportunities for Rate Restructuring (Government Code §56430(a)(5)):

- a) The Napa County Resource Conservation District has developed a fee schedule for the purchase of its maps and publications. The District reviews this fee schedule on a regular basis to ensure that the rates adequately recover its production costs.
- b) The Napa County Resource Conservation District is authorized under its principal act to charge fees for its conservation services. The District should consider establishing a fee schedule that helps to recover its service costs in a manner that does not discourage the public from participating in its conservation programs.

Opportunities for Shared Facilities (Government Code §56430(a)(6)):

- a) The Napa County Resource Conservation District maintains a long-standing partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. This partnership, which includes the sharing of office space, equipment, and staff resources, is formalized through a memorandum of understanding and helps to coordinate and enhance local conservation activities.
- b) The Napa County Resource Conservation District works with local agencies, citizens, and organizations on a variety watershed protection and flood prevention projects in Napa County. These projects range from monitoring stream flows to organizing volunteer stewardship groups and help to connect private and public interests to serve common conservation goals.

Government Structure Options (Government Code §56430(a)(7)):

- a) The Napa County Resource Conservation District is the only public agency authorized to provide a full range of soil and water conservation services within its jurisdictional boundary. The conservation services provided by the District are important in restoring and protecting the community's natural resources.

Evaluation of Management Efficiencies (Government Code §56430(a)(8)):

- a) Services for the Napa County Resource Conservation District are guided by adopted annual and long-range work plans that establish conservation goals and objectives. These work plans serve as effective performance measures and encourage management efficiencies by prioritizing District resources in a transparent manner.
- b) The Napa County Resource Conservation District provides a summary of past and projected revenues and expenditures as part of its annual budget. The budget is adopted following a publicly noticed board meeting in which members of the public are allowed to comment and offer suggestions with respect to District expenditures. This budget process establishes efficiencies by providing a clear directive towards staff with respect to prioritizing the resources of the District.

Local Accountability and Governance (Government Code §56430(a)(9)):

- a) The Napa County Resource Conservation District is governed by seven regular and seven associate board members that are appointed by and accountable to the County of Napa Board of Supervisors.
- b) Meetings of the Napa County Resource Conservation District are conducted once a month and are open to the public. These meetings provide an opportunity for District constituents to ask questions of their appointed representatives and help to ensure that service information is being effectively communicated to the public.
- c) The Napa County Resource Conservation District makes concerted efforts to maintain public dialogue with its constituents through various educational and stewardship programs. These efforts foster greater conservation awareness and contribute towards public involvement in District activities.
- d) A long-term challenge for the Napa County Resource Conservation District is securing grants that support and extend local conservation services that are responsive to the needs of the community.